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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 005370

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE  
THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION  
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HEADLINES

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MASS APPEAL

Belgian PM Invites PM Erdogan for Breakfast -Hurriyet  
New Attacks Against Turkish Drivers in Iraq - Hurriyet  
12 Turks Missing in Iraq - Sabah  
PM Erdogan Sees No Problem in Ties With EU - Sabah  
PM Erdogan: Turkey-EU Relations Running Smoothly - Milliyet  
Verheugen: No Accession Talks Before Penal Code Reforms -  
Milliyet  
Twelve Turkish Truck Drivers Allegedly Killed in Iraq -  
Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

EU Warned Turkey Three Months Ago on Penal Code - Radikal  
Adultery is not the Only Trouble in Penal Code - Radikal  
US Acknowledges Its Mistake in Tal Afar - Cumhuriyet  
Adultery the Critical Knot in EU Entry Talks - Cumhuriyet  
Verheugen Says Reforms Essential in Penal Code - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Penal code/adultery debate: EU expansion commissioner  
Guenter Verheugen's office announced over the weekend that  
Ankara has to pass the penal code reforms before October 6.  
PM Erdogan gave a harsh response to the EU, saying that  
nobody had a right to interfere in Turkey's internal  
affairs, and that EU membership is not anything that Turks  
cannot do without. Monday papers report Verheugen as saying  
that EU-Turkey full membership talks would not be opened if  
'adultery' is added to the penal code bill. Turkey should  
display the will to bring together traditional Turkish  
values with European values, Verheugen said, and stressed  
that European values are not open to discussion. Erdogan is  
expected to visit Brussels on September 22 in an effort to  
defuse the strain in EU-Turkey ties, say papers. German  
Chancellor Schroeder's office called Ankara over the weekend  
to remind the government that Erdogan was supposed to  
receive the 'Quadrigo' friendship award in Berlin October 3.  
Erdogan has put his image as a 'European leader' at risk,  
Schroeder's office told the Turkish prime minister's office,  
but noted that Erdogan could still receive the award if the  
penal code is passed before early October. On the other  
hand, Monday "Radikal" reports that adultery issue was not  
the only controversial provision restricting freedoms in the  
penal code bill. The bill contains heavy penalties for  
defending views contrary to Turkey's national independence,  
territorial integrity and national security. For example,  
Article 306 of the bill brings heavy prison terms for asking  
for the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus, or for  
defending Armenian genocide claims, says "Radikal." Weekend  
papers speculate that Erdogan would wait to see the October  
6 EU progress report on Turkey before doing anything with  
the penal code reform bill.

Tal Afar: Following the US assault that claimed 67 lives in  
the northern Iraqi town of Tal Afar, a 'senior US official'  
in Iraq acknowledged that the number of foreign fighters in  
the town had been 'very few,' "Cumhuriyet" cites  
international wires. US Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hastings  
reportedly said the operation had been initiated upon the  
request of Tal Afar residents complaining about foreign  
militants and supporters of Saddam Hussein who took control  
of the northern Iraqi town. A tribal leader said despite  
the fact that they had made the insurgents leave Tal Afar on  
September 8, US forces attacked the town on September 12.  
Meanwhile, a Turkish Red Crescent's humanitarian aid convoy  
arrived in Tal Afar Sunday. The aid will be given to Tal  
Afar residents today. Monday "Milliyet" reports two  
journalists working for "Milliyet" had been detained by US  
forces in Mosul while en route Tal Afar together with the

aid convoy. The reporters were handcuffed and hooded by snow masks before being interrogated `for hours.' The journalists were later released and handed over to the Iraqi Turkmen Front. US forces have treated Turkish journalists as terrorists, writes "Milliyet."

Turks missing in Iraq: Turkish papers report 12 Turkish truck drivers killed or abducted in the Balad province near Baghdad. Al-Jazeera reported Saturday night that Iraqi insurgents abducted 10 workers of a Turkish-American company in Iraq, and had threatened to kill them unless their company leaves the country in 72 hours. Two Hundred Turkish companies are currently working in Iraq.

US nationals may ask reparation from `TRNC': The Greek lobby in the US has submitted a bill to the House of Representatives asking for compensation for the real estate which was confiscated after Turkey's occupation of north Cyprus in 1974, Sunday "Zaman" reports. Most of the real estate seized belonged to Greek Cypriot Americans. If enacted, the bill authorizes US courts to follow up on the issue. The Armenian lobby in the US has supported the bill, claims "Zaman."

#### EDITORIAL OPINION:

##### "Bargaining With Brussels"

Ferai Tinc commented in the mass appeal Hurriyet (9/20): "PM Erdogan is going to Brussels this week. I wouldn't like to be in his shoes, because, even I was fed up with the foreign press's questions on the Turkish Penal Code. Some journalists asked me if Turkish family structure could harmonize with the European family structure. Some others said `in Turkey honor killings are widely tolerated. Do you think this is in harmony with Europe?' None of these is true, however, and we don't deserve this prejudiced thinking. However, we are so successful in giving wrong messages that we just cannot give the right ones. I would like to give the foreign journalists the story of the two female mayors in the southeast whom I met last week and explain how hard they are working to defend women's rights, to better education, and explain how they are doing real good work in many other areas. PM Erdogan is going to Brussels on September 23. He is going to give the message that Turkey fulfilled the Copenhagen Criteria. But, if he decides to bargain in a conservative manner with Brussels with the examples that abortion is not available in Ireland or some other country negotiates gay marriages, etc., then he has no chances for success in bargaining with the EU."

##### "US' Religious Freedom Report"

Zeynep Gurcanli wrote in the State controlled Star (9/18): "Lately, the US is always on the top of the Turkish government's agenda. Because of the Tal Afar bombings, Kurdish migration to Kirkuk etc., Turkish government members often criticize US policies. While this `anti-American' atmosphere continues in the Turkish government, AKP received unexpected support from the US in its internal issues. The support came on the `head scarf and the public areas' issue. Instead of giving support directly, the US carried the issue in its annual `Religious Freedom Report'. According to the report, during his visit to Turkey, President Bush talked with President Sezer on the issue of religious freedom and delivered the message that the custom of religious freedom in Turkey should continue, and different religions should be recognized and protected. Also, in the report, the fact that ministers' wives wearing head scarves are not allowed in the Presidential Palace was given as an example of violations of freedom. The report supports secularism in Turkey, and indirectly supports the opposite section too. The report also says that despite all the efforts by the Patriarch, the Halki Seminary couldn't re-open. But the AKP government does not stop the Ecumenical activities of the Fener Patriarch either. And the most interesting part of the report is that all US Diplomats including Ambassador Edelman discussed these issues during their private meetings with the Turkish cabinet members and even invited the government members to `Religious dinners'."

EDELMAN